

# MINORITIES OF INFLUENCE: CPAS



**A**S WE HAVE DISCOVERED OVER THE PAST YEAR, CHALLENGING AND UNEXPECTED TIMES REQUIRE US TO RELY ON OUR trusted advisors more than ever. In times of uncertainty, accountants and financial professionals are particularly needed to help our businesses respond and react to issues at hand. Those of us living and working in Los Angeles are fortunate to have access to an impressive, and diverse, selection of financial professionals.

Los Angeles is truly a national leader when it comes to diversity in business – and the field of accounting is no exception. There are some particularly stellar CPAs in the LA region who happen to be minorities. Our special section, “Minorities of Influence: CPAs” contains an alphabetical list of many of our region’s outstanding accountants, along with some highlights about their careers, practices and recent accomplishments they have achieved.

Congratulations to the superb professionals who made the list this year and thank you for working to keep the people and businesses of Los Angeles on the right fiscal track.



**Ashok Parmar**

*Audit & Assurance  
Partner  
Deloitte & Touche LLP*



**Rosie Procopio**

*Audit & Assurance  
Managing Director  
Deloitte & Touche LLP*



**Alejandro Mendez**

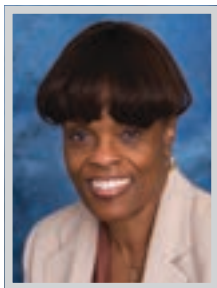
*Audit & Assurance  
Managing Director  
Deloitte & Touche LLP*

## Making a mark

We are proud to recognize our accomplished leaders:

Deloitte congratulates Ashok, Rosie, Alejandro and all outstanding leaders named as Minorities of Influence: CPA's of the year by the *Los Angeles Business Journal*.

MINORITIES OF INFLUENCE: CPAS



**CHERYL CALHOUN**  
*Managing Director*  
 CBIZ & MHM

**A**s Managing Director at CBIZ MHM Los Angeles, Cheryl Calhoun brings more than 30 years of experience and expertise to all facets of the entertainment industry. She represents talent, production companies, entertainment service companies, media service companies, publishing companies and executives in varied tax and business matters. Calhoun is also a co-leader of CBIZ's Multi-Family Office and Virtual Family Office Practices. In addition, she specializes in assisting not-for-profit organizations — combining her talent for business and tax issues with her desire to contribute and support causes in the community. Calhoun champions the mission of organizations she supports by building strategic relationships and ensuring that the partnerships are in the best interest of each organization. She has worked with the American Lung Association for 10 years, where she helped build the inaugural board in Los Angeles, served on the regional and national boards of the organization, and participated in its steering committee.



**KAMI COHEN**  
*Partner*  
 Miller Kaplan

**K**ami Cohen has worked in public accounting for more than 20 years and specializes in financial statement audits for employee benefit plans and labor organizations. He consults on internal control matters and provides guidance to his clients on filing and reporting compliance requirements and best practices. In addition to his work with clients, Cohen serves on several of the firm's operational committees including the Executive Committee and the Engagement Quality Control Review Committee (where he is engaged in identifying audit deficiencies and evaluating audit quality before the report is issued). He is also the co-chairperson for the firm's Human Resources Committee and participates in HR management, evaluating employee performance, benefits, and incentives, including the quality of work life. He is designated as a Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA), bestowed by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants.



**STAFORD FRANÇOIS**  
*Senior Manager*  
 CohnReznick

**S**taford François, who grew up on the island of Haïti in the Caribbean, has spent most of his 14 years of public accounting servicing both private and public clients. He has experience working with managers of fund-to-funds, private equity funds, 1940 Act funds, hedge funds, debt funds, and with broker dealers. He has always enjoyed sharing his knowledge with others, and after joining CohnReznick, started training nationally from staff level through partners, and is a subject matter expert in the Financial Service Group. François has taken the lead on various national projects within the firm's Financial Services Group to help drive continuous improvement in audit quality and efficiency. He also serves as a mentor to colleagues with whom he discusses different career paths either within or outside of public accounting. He finds it incredibly rewarding to see how he can help shape the career paths of those he mentors.



**TONY GALES**  
*Partner*  
 BPM LLP

**W**ith nearly 30 years of public accounting experience, Tony Gales, a tax partner in BPM's Long Beach office, helps untangle the intricacies of federal, state and local tax laws to uncover and plan for tax opportunities clients can leverage to achieve their financial goals. With expertise across dozens of the region's most critical industries, including technology, life sciences and real estate, Gales has the depth of knowledge and experience to create tax plans tailored to each organization's unique issues. He studies clients' business needs, considers the issues and opportunities and develops the right financial strategies to meet their short- and long-term needs. Additionally, Gales frequently helps clients with complex tax and business planning services. Of recent note, Gales assisted a client with a cost segregation analysis to uncover short lived assets, resulting in six-figure tax savings.



**Congratulations**  
**KAMI COHEN**

*on being recognized as a one of LABJ's Minorities of Influence: CPAs.*  
*Your expertise and commitment to your clients are unmatched!*

## MINORITIES OF INFLUENCE: CPAS

**KEITH HAMASAKI**

Director  
KROST

Keith Hamasaki is passionate about empowering others so they can help them build a better future for themselves. As a director at KROST, he brings together a strong and cohesive team to provide his clients value-added experience through collaborative partnership. With over a decade of experience, Hamasaki specializes in audit and business advisory services to emerging and middle market companies in areas such as attestation, process improvement, internal controls, technical GAAP accounting implementation, and procedural review assessments. He has developed an expertise in a variety of industries including real estate and construction, financial services, technology, digital media, restaurants, hospitality, not-for-profit organizations, and employee benefit plans. Further, he leads the firm's Manufacturing and Distribution Industry Group and co-champions the data analytics practice called KROST Business Intelligence that allows middle market companies to translate their data into meaningful insights.

**ALBERT J. JANG**

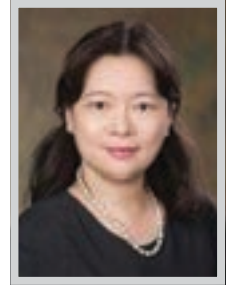
Managing Partner  
Kim & Lee, LLP

Albert Jang has been serving Korean American communities in Los Angeles since 1995. For the last ten years, he has been leading Kim & Lee, LLP as managing partner. The firm is considered to be the largest CPA firm in the Korean American community in the US. Under his leadership, the firm has grown its operation to be ready for next generation and the operation with digital transformation. He also demonstrates his community spirit by participating in many non-profit organization actively for the last 20 years. He is a serving board member with the Korean American Coalition, Korean American Special Education Center, Korean American Chamber of Commerce of Los Angeles, Korean Community Lions Club, and many more. He also organized and leads the LA Sinfonietta – a nonprofit orchestra – which helps young musicians gain opportunities to perform in the local communities.

**SHREEDHAR KOTHARI**

Shareholder  
Gumbiner Savett Inc.

Shreedhar (Shree) Kothari is an executive shareholder at Gumbiner Savett Inc., a mid-sized CPA, tax and business advisory firm based in Santa Monica. As a practitioner, Kothari's focus is on helping growth-oriented companies get to the next level with proper audit and financial reporting requirements and tax structuring and planning. He also works with technology startups, as well as venture and private equity backed companies. He has extensive experience in working with businesses through merger & acquisition transactions and providing management and financial consulting. With his experience as a cost and chartered accountant, he is well versed with the global business environment and works heavily with entrepreneurs and closely-held private company clients who come from various sectors such as manufacturing and distribution, apparel and textile, jewelry, construction, food and beverage and importing.

**JOANNA LI**

Partner, Tax Services  
RSM US LLP

Joanna Li is a tax partner at RSM in Los Angeles where she focuses on growing the corporate tax office practice. She has served both the Los Angeles and Orange County business communities for over 20 years and has built a solid reputation for providing outstanding income tax provision, consulting, and compliance services to both publicly traded and privately held companies. Her clients do business in various industries, including technology, automotive, media and entertainment, apparel, real estate, manufacturing and distribution. Li's clients rely on her to provide professional tax services, including federal, international, and multi-state corporate income tax matters. She has extensive experience in preparation and review of global income tax provisions in accordance with ASC740 compliance for multi-national SEC companies. Her specialty areas include international tax provision, business combination, interim reporting, intra-period allocation, and stock based compensation.



We are honored and proud to congratulate our Managing Director, Cheryl A. Calhoun on being named among the *Los Angeles Business Journal's* Minorities of Influence: CPAs!



Cheryl A. Calhoun  
Tax & Business Management  
Managing Director

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MHM (Mayer Hoffman McCann P.C.) is an independent CPA firm that provides audit, review and attest services, and works closely with CBIZ, a business consulting, tax and financial services provider. CBIZ and MHM are members of Kreston International Limited, a global network of independent accounting firms.

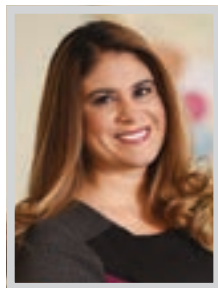
## MINORITIES OF INFLUENCE: CPAs



**HARRY LIN**  
MBA, CPA

Harry C. Lin, CPA A Professional Corporation

Harry Lin started Harry C. Lin, CPA A Professional Corporation in Los Angeles in 1992. Prior to starting his own firm, Mr. Lin spent several years at various accounting firms in California and Taiwan which included prominent Los Angeles area firm Gleicher, Tilley & Leonard and one of the Big Eight accounting firms Price Waterhouse in Taiwan. Lin became supervisor at Price Waterhouse's expatriate tax department. Lin is well known for his IRS advocacy expertise and international tax planning. Lin was one of the major shareholders in Grand Foremost, Inc., which supplies the Southern California hospitality industry. Lin also specializes in hotel and retail rental real estate. He was extremely instrumental in the founding of the Sino-American CPAs Association, which is one of the most active Chinese American civil organizations in Los Angeles and has been named Emeritus Founding Chairman since 1993.



**KARLA CHAVEZ LUNA**  
CPA, MST Tax Shareholder  
Gumbiner Savett Inc.

Karla Chavez Luna joined Gumbiner Savett immediately after graduating from college in 2000 and has steadily risen through the ranks of the tax department to become the first Latina Shareholder. She specializes in tax planning, consulting, and compliance for privately held companies, trusts and estates, and high-net-worth families and their entities. In addition to her full client roster and business development responsibilities, Luna is heavily involved in the Gumbiner Savett Tax Department's operational and culture-building activities. She is a sought-after mentor among the younger staff, who view her as a role model as well as a source for honest and thoughtful career advice. She was recently chosen to take over a book of business from a retiring senior leader. Luna is building a strong professional network as a member of The Exchange Los Angeles.



**TES MACARAYA**  
Partner  
Martini Akpovi Partners, LLP

Tes Macaraya is a thought leader, a mentor, and a partner at Martini Akpovi Partners, LLP. She began practicing public accounting in 1989. A first-generation immigrant from the Philippines, Macaraya moved to America at the age of 20. She became a licensed CPA in 1993, and attained her Masters in Taxation from Golden Gate University. She became a partner at Martini Akpovi Partners, LLP in 2016, and the Tax Practice leader in 2018. As Tax Practice leader, she provides tax planning and compliance services for businesses and high net worth clients in the real estate industry, technology, manufacturing, and professional services sectors. She helps them from entity formation to business sale transactions. Supporting and mentoring accountants from less privileged backgrounds is close to her heart. She co-founded a Women Empowering Women networking group, through which she encourages women to pursue their ideal careers.



**GABRIEL MARQUEZ**  
Partner  
CohnReznick

Gabriel Marquez is a partner and industry leader in CohnReznick's Real Estate Assurance practice with over 32 years of professional experience. He has served a variety of public and privately-held real estate and construction companies, including real estate developers/owners/operators, pension-sponsored and private equity real estate funds, homebuilders, engineering firms and contractors. For Marquez, serving his real estate clients is rivaled only by the opportunity to recruit, train, develop and promote diverse, underrepresented minorities in public accounting. As a Latino professional growing up through the ranks, Marquez understood the importance of having mentors that shared his cultural experiences and customs. Throughout his career and particularly as a partner, Marquez has been a role model for a growing number of diverse professionals working side-by-side teaching them about real estate, supporting their advancement in public accounting and even into private industry at some of the most prominent real estate firms in Southern California.

Hardworking. Committed. Inspiring.  
Congratulations Joanna Li and  
Mohamed Sobhy.

RSM is pleased to recognize that **Joanna Li** and **Mohamed Sobhy** are among the Los Angeles Business Journal's Most Influential Minority CPAs.

[rsmus.com](http://rsmus.com)

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## MINORITIES OF INFLUENCE: CPAS

**ALEJANDRO MENDEZ**

*Audit Managing Director,  
California Agribusiness Audit Leader  
Deloitte & Touche LLP*

Alejandro Mendez has had a wide range of experience in public accounting, serving both private and public companies in manufacturing and consumer products. He is a leader in the California agribusiness community of practice and focuses on delivering leading insights to companies within the sector across a wide variety of topics. In addition, Mendez's experience serving the consumer product industry ranges from retail and apparel to distributor and manufacturing companies. He also has had extensive experience serving private equity backed companies of varying sizes and structures and frequently advises companies through M&A and financing-related transactions. Mendez is a sought-after mentor and coach, he is an audit coach for US teams and provides training to practitioners at Deloitte Mexico, and beyond. Prior to launching his career, he earned his Bachelor of Science in Accountancy at California State University-Northridge.

**SATPAL NAGPAL**

*Partner  
GHJ*

Satpal Nagpal is GHJ's Audit Practice leader with more than 20 years of public accounting experience providing audit, accounting and business consulting services. He is a key member of the firm's Waste Management Group and Nonprofit Practice. Nagpal's vast industry experience extends to education, recycling, distribution, real estate and home building, e-commerce and entertainment. He is passionate about the education sector and serves on the board of Synergy Academies. Nagpal has lectured at the Hebrew Union College and at the Riordan Volunteer Leadership Development Program on a nonprofit financial management course and has participated at the round table conference for guiding USC Masters of Accounting and Taxation students in making career decisions. Not only does Nagpal enjoy helping clients grow their businesses and assisting them on complex audit issues, but he is passionate about innovation within accounting.

**ANGEL NAVAL**

*Director, Assurance  
MGO LLP*

Angel Naval is a trailblazing leader at MGO who excels while juggling multiple projects and roles. In her professional career, Naval is a licensed CPA and auditor who co-oversees and manages the West Coast and India operations for MGO's Financial, Accounting and Advisory Services department. At home, she is a mom and teacher to two very active toddlers. In the past year, the line between these roles has blurred for many professionals, and Naval has only continued to exceed expectations. Amid the disruptions presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, Naval has been a leader in implementing tools, operational and policy changes, and workflows that make engagements more efficient and effective. She is also passionate about minority representation in the accounting profession. As an active member of the International Society of Filipinos in Finance and Accounting, she attends and speaks at national conferences and helps host mentoring panels to inspire future minority accountants.

**LIZBETH NEVAREZ**

*Managing Director  
GHJ*

Lizbeth Nevarez has more than ten years of public accounting experience providing tax and consulting services and leads GHJ's Nonprofit Tax Practice. She is also secretary for GHJ Foundation, GHJ's vehicle for purposeful and proactive giving to the community. Additionally, Nevarez co-leads GHJ's Women's Empowerment Cohort, which is part of GHJ's DEI initiative. She is a frequent speaker at the firm's nonprofit workshops and conferences. She has also completed the Riordan Leadership Institute's Board service program through the Los Angeles Junior Chamber of Commerce and has taught courses on Form 900 basics and Private Foundations through CalCPA. Nevarez currently serves on the Board of Executive Service Corps, a leading nonprofit provider of high-impact, affordable management development services to other nonprofits in Southern California. Nevarez is a champion of women in the workplace and an emerging business development leader and dedicated trailblazer in the Los Angeles Nonprofit community.

# Because Tony Gales Matters.



**Tony Gales**  
Partner, Tax

For our clients, whose sheer brainpower and determination inspire us to our best work. For our communities, who so generously welcome us and grant all our lives meaning. And for our people, like Tony Gales — business leaders who are truly influential in their fields and organizations.

At BPM, we work hard every day to live up to our promise not only to our clients, but to our people and our communities. For us, it all comes down to one factor:

**Because People Matter.**

A hearty congratulations to Tony and all the CPAs recognized by the Los Angeles Business Journal!

To learn more about our services and our approach, visit [bpmcpa.com/cbj](http://bpmcpa.com/cbj)

# BPM

TAX | ASSURANCE | ADVISORY

MINORITIES OF INFLUENCE: CPAS



**ASHOK PARMAR**

*Accounting and Reporting Advisory Partner,  
Public Company Readiness Leader  
Deloitte & Touche LLP*

**A**shok Parmar leads Deloitte & Touche’s accounting and reporting advisory (ARA) services in the Pacific Southwest. He has extensive experience in SPAC/IPO readiness, SOX advisory, and new standards implementation engagements, for clients ranging from startups to large public companies. He is also an ASC Topic 842 and IFRS 16 lease accounting subject matter specialist. Parmar hosts key marketplace activities in Los Angeles area, including, quarterly accounting roundtables in Santa Monica, Westlake, and Santa Paula. Additionally, he supports causes within the community. His extensive experience in the private and public sector, along with his passion in helping people and clients, has made him an in-demand professional within the region.



**ANANT PATEL**

*Partner  
GHJ*

**A**nant Patel, CPA, has over 25 years of public accounting experience and leads both the GHJ Consulting Practice and Transaction Advisory Practice and is a member of the Executive Committee for the firm. He advises in the area of mergers and acquisitions and provides financial due diligence consulting such as quality of earnings, working capital analysis, EBITDA analysis and projections and deal structuring. Patel has assisted on deals ranging from \$20 million to \$500 million and is a Certified Merger & Acquisition Advisor. His reach goes far beyond his leadership at the firm, as he is global chair of the HLB International Transaction Advisory Services Group, a global accounting firm network ranked as the 12th largest network worldwide. He has also been selected to speak at several international HLB conferences on audit, advisory and transaction work. His leadership has helped accounting firms partner across the globe to better serve their clients.



**ROSIE PROCOPIO**

*Audit Managing Director,  
West Not-for Profit Audit Leader  
Deloitte & Touche LLP*

**R**osie Procopio serves as Deloitte’s not-for-profit Audit leader in the West Region. She has over 20 years’ experience serving both public and private entities in the non-profit, family business, healthcare (plan and provider), life sciences, medical device and governmental industries. Procopio is on the steering committee for the Global Center for Excellence in Philanthropy (GCEP), which serves leaders and innovators in the philanthropic space who are seeking a solutions-based approach, exemplifying Deloitte’s commitment to making a social impact. She is also a collaborative and hands-on leader who understands the importance of trust, communication, and balance in working with clients and engagement teams.



**LORI ROCK**

*Partner in Charge, Tax Services,  
Los Angeles Office  
Marcum LLP*

**L**ori Rock is the partner in charge of Tax Services for Marcum LLP’s Los Angeles office. Rock made partner in September 2017, becoming the first female partner in Marcum’s Los Angeles office and is one of only two female partners in the Southern California region. To become a partner at Marcum, a top 15 national accounting and advisory firm, represents a significant accomplishment in Rock’s professional career – one she earned through hard work, dedication to superior client service, and leadership within her office. She is a frequent presenter at annual tax updates put on for clients and service providers. She often travels as a subject matter expert to speak on various tax issues and has become the go-to partner for clients and colleagues with complex questions. She is a member of the firm’s national Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Steering Committee as well as the recently formed Client Experience Advisory Committee.



**Marcum**  
is proud to congratulate  
**Partner, Lori Rock,**  
on being named to the  
*Los Angeles Business Journal’s*  
**Minorities of Influence: CPAs.**

**MARCUM**  
ACCOUNTANTS ▲ ADVISORS

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**DIVERSITY &  
INCLUSION**  
at **MARCUM**

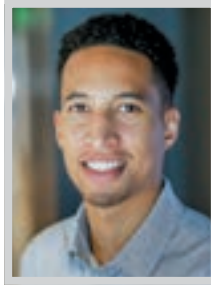
**Marcum** is committed to fostering a culture that is both diverse and inclusive - one that encourages and enables all associates and partners to be successful.

## MINORITIES OF INFLUENCE: CPAS

**CONNIE SCOTTI**

Senior Manager  
Moss Adams

Connie Scotti is a premier tax advisor and business consultant. She has unique and highly skilled qualifications in the area of taxation that include both domestic and a deep international tax specialization. An excellent client service provider and trusted advisor, she consults with clients regarding many complex cross-border issues and is called upon routinely for her expertise in tax planning matters and transactions. She also serves as a technical advisor within Moss Adams and is highly regarded for her strong capabilities. Her talents and skills include a very unique blend of domestic and international tax expertise for businesses and executives. Scotti currently serves in the Los Angeles office as a client service professional managing a very complex client base. Previously, she served a one-year term in the firm's International Tax Specialty Group, deepening her international tax and consulting skills.

**KIYOSHI WILLIAM SMITH**

Supervising Senior  
Armanino

Kiyoshi William Smith has emerged as a key leader within Armanino, both as a tax expert and in moving the company forward in its diversity efforts. He's been with the firm since January 2017, rising to the role of supervising senior tax accountant. He currently specializes in the cannabis and entertainment industries, providing tax compliance for privately held businesses and their individuals. He previously focused on domestic tax compliance and transfer pricing at Armanino, performing financial modeling for various projects related to IP migration and restructuring projects. Smith is an essential member of Armanino's Diversity & Inclusion Committee. He initiated a relationship for the firm with the National Association of Black Accountants, and his engagement on the committee over the last two years has earned Armanino spots on diversity panels, inclusion in newsletters, and recognition as leaders in diversity throughout the industry.

**MOHAMED SOBHY**

Partner  
RSM US LLP

Mohamed Sobhy is a partner at RSM US LLP and leads the consumer products industry team in the Los Angeles marketplace. He has over 32 years of accounting and auditing experience with public and private entities with significant experience in auditing companies in the consumer and industrial products, and construction industries. Prior to RSM, he was an audit partner at Arthur Andersen for multistate and multinational public and privately held companies in the manufacturing, distribution, retail, financial services, and not-for-profit industries. Sobhy has extensive experience in performing departmental, operational and internal control reviews, as well as presenting complex audit reports, management letters and emerging-industry trend analyses to boards of directors, Audit Committees and other governance bodies. Sobhy has secured several marquee clients for RSM, and as leader of consumer products group for the Los Angeles market, he has implemented best practices to achieve double-digit growth in that industry.

**OMAIR SYED**

Senior Manager  
Armanino

One of Armanino's core tenants is empowerment, which no one embodies better than Omair Syed. He's been with the firm since August 2015, rising from supervisor to senior supervisor to manager to senior manager – consulting, the role he holds today. His mastery in both technical tax work and managing professional relationships has powered him to service about half of Armanino's law firm clients. In the last year, Syed has gone above and beyond in supporting Armanino's clients with their PPP Loans. Not only did he become an expert within the firm, he has emerged as a leading authority on PPP loans and new regulations throughout the accounting industry. He has provided guidance and expertise to accountants across departments and teams, becoming a key leader on this incredibly critical topic for the firm. He's constantly staying on top of the changing environment and sharing his knowledge.

# You've earned this view.

Congratulations to our colleague, Fred Tan, for being honored as one of the Los Angeles Business Journal's Minorities of Influence: CPAs.



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MINORITIES OF INFLUENCE: CPAS



**FRED TAN**

Managing Director, Tax  
Grant Thornton

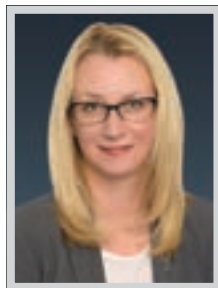
The son of Chinese immigrants from Vietnam, Fred Tan was born and raised in the Southland, and was among the first generation of his family to attend college. After graduating with Cum Laude honors from UCLA, he joined Grant Thornton’s Los Angeles office as an associate in 2003. Since then, he has worked his way up to become a managing director in the firm’s Privately Held Business Services tax practice, where he oversees national and global clients in a range of industries. Today he is a strong believer in helping Pan-Asian professionals succeed – both within Grant Thornton and in the broader community. As Ascend LA’s vice president of Professional Development, then later as a board member, Tan worked with companies in Southern California to host interactive programs focused on career advancement and to understand how the cultural aspects of an Asian American upbringing can help in a corporate environment.



**VAIBHAV TANDON**

Audit and Accounting Manager  
Gumbiner Savett Inc.

Despite the challenges due to COVID-19 in 2020, including being short staffed, Vaibhav Tandon was responsible for the successful completion and filing of all 401k audits by working with, and overseeing, the audit team including first year staff. Dedicated to providing superior accounting services to clients, he works closely with business owners, CFOs and controllers to help them grow their business and assist them on complex audit issues. Many of the firm’s partners rely on Tandon to work on engagements with new clients. He contributes innovative ideas to further enhance the firm’s ongoing growth within the audit practice and is a trusted advisor dedicated to achieving financial and business success for the firm’s clients. He firmly believes clients are looking for firms that provide services to them to be representative of their workforce and strives to be someone they can connect with.



**NATALIE TRONKINA**

Partner  
CohnReznick

Natalie Tronkina is a partner and member of CohnReznick’s Transactional Advisory Services practice, based in the Los Angeles office. She has more than 15 years of transactional advisory experience, focusing primarily on buy-side and sell-side due diligence for private equity funds, lenders, and strategic buyers and sellers. She was elected to the partnership in February 2020. As an emerging leader at CohnReznick, she is a past winner of the firm’s PYRAMID awards which recognizes the accomplishments of employees in serving the firm, our clients, and the greater public good. Tronkina is committed to initiatives that drive value for her clients and her community and has developed strong, lasting relationships with private equity firms based on the consistent quality of her work. She is the co-leader of the firm’s Executive Women’s Forum platform in the Los Angeles metro area. She has assisted clients with engagements of all sizes in multiple industries.



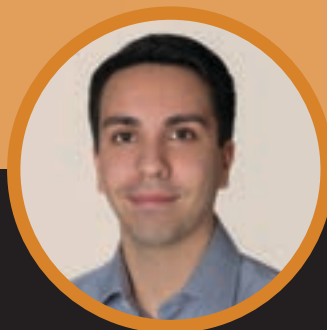
**BELLA WANG**

Tax Director  
Windes

Bella Wang joined Windes in 2000 and is a director in the firm’s Tax department. Her professional experience includes tax planning and consulting for businesses of all sizes, as well as corporations, partnerships, and high-net-worth individuals. Wang works closely with business owners and investors, specializing in international tax considerations, consultation, and compliance on inbound and outbound transactions. She serves a wide variety of clients in the real estate, transportation, technology, manufacturing, professional services, healthcare, and restaurant industries. Wang is the practice leader for many of the firm’s strategic planning and incentive program services. She championed the formalization and development of the PPP and Employee Retention Credit services within the tax department to effectively and efficiently service businesses and nonprofit organizations impacted by COVID-19. In addition, she is a member of the firm’s Tax Technical Committee and manages the tax content for articles that the firm provides to clients and key contacts.

# Congratulations Omais Syed & Kiyoshi William Smith

Named “Minorities of Influence: CPAs”  
by the *Los Angeles Business Journal*



At Armanino, our purpose is to be the most innovative and entrepreneurial firm that makes a positive impact on the lives of our clients, our people and our communities. Achieving our purpose requires a culture that unleashes the power of diversity and creates an environment in which every member of the Armanino team feels respected, valued for their uniqueness and experiences, connected to their colleagues and the firm, confident to speak up, and comfortable to be themselves. Our differences make us stronger, smarter and more innovative. All are welcome at Armanino.



## MINORITIES OF INFLUENCE: CPAS

# AICPA to Build Diverse Talent Pool of CPAs via Leadership Workshop

## Minority students are encouraged to apply to the AICPA's 2021 Accounting Scholars Leadership Workshop

The American Institute of CPAs (AICPA) is encouraging qualified students to apply for the 2021 Accounting Scholars Leadership Workshop (ASLW) being held October 13-15 in New Orleans.

The annual workshop is an opportunity for ethnic minority college accounting students, as well as undeclared students with an interest in accounting, to strengthen their professional and networking skills and to increase their understanding of the career possibilities and benefits of earning the CPA credential, while at the same time bolstering the pipeline of minority members of the profession.

"ASLW gives ethnic minority students an opportunity to really see the benefits of a career in the accounting profession and offers tools to prepare them as they launch their careers," said Chris Mitchell, senior manager of diversity and inclusion for the Association of International Certified Professional Accountants (the Association), representing AICPA and CIMA. "It also provides these students with access to a network of professionals with whom they can build working relationships."

The U.S. Census projects that minority



populations will comprise more than 50% of the total population in 2045, with the largest growth being among multiracial individuals. Firms will need to better reflect the ethnic and racial makeup of their communities and clients.

During the three-day program, students explore what it means to be a CPA, how their backgrounds and experience can add value to the profession and network with practicing CPAs. Sessions and panel discussions will cover an array of topics, including developing leadership skills and what to expect from the CPA

exam. The event will run concurrently with the AICPA's Diversity Symposium.

The program is open to undergraduate majoring or interested in accounting and fifth year or 5th year or graduate accounting majors. Applications will be accepted through May 15, 2021. Students accepted to the 2020 workshop, which was cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic, are being invited to this year's event and do not need to reapply.

"The accounting profession is committed to working toward expanding the number of

ethnic minority CPAs," said Crystal Cooke, the Association's director of diversity and inclusion. "ASLW is one of our efforts focused on pipeline, a critical area that the AICPA is undertaking to accomplish this important goal."

The ASLW is funded by the AICPA Foundation and covers the cost of attendees' experience, including transportation to/from the workshop location, hotel accommodations and meals.

More information about the program, as well as instructions to apply, are available at [thiswaytocpa.com](http://thiswaytocpa.com).

ASLW is one of several programs and resources from the AICPA to help promote diversity and inclusion in the profession. The Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model is a tool to help organizations assess and measure their diversity and inclusion efforts. The George Willie Scholarship and Internship program offers students a scholarship and an internship during tax season with one of the AICPA's Private Company Practice Section member firms. And the AICPA Scholarship Award for Minority Accounting Students, part of the AICPA Legacy Scholars program, provides funding to outstanding minority students studying accounting.

For more information on the ASLW and the AICPA's Diversity and Inclusion programs, email [diversity@aicpa.org](mailto:diversity@aicpa.org).



The team at Martini Akpovi Partners would like to congratulate our partner and tax practice leader

## TES MACARAYA

for being recognized by the Los Angeles Business Journal in their Minorities of Influence list.

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# New Research Reveals Significant Diversity Challenges in Accounting Profession

The Institute of Management Accountants (IMA) and the California Society of Certified Public Accountants, (CalCPA) in February released groundbreaking research findings in their joint study, “Diversifying U.S. Accounting Talent: A Critical Imperative to Achieve Transformational Outcomes.” This diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) research study examines three demographic focus areas: race and ethnicity, gender, and LGBTQIA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual) orientation in the U.S. accounting profession, encompassing public accounting and management accounting (accountants and financial professionals in business). The study also examines the role of ethics in the profession’s overall progress around DE&I and presents solutions to drive expansive change.

The report is available at [www.imanet.org/diversifying-accounting-talent](http://www.imanet.org/diversifying-accounting-talent).

The first in a multi-part global series, this report is informed by results from an online survey of over 3,000 current and former U.S. accounting and finance professionals and interviews of nearly 60 accounting, human resources, and DE&I practitioners and academics. The study found that there is a significant diversity gap between those in executive leadership ranks and the broader accounting profession as well as the U.S. population. For example, African Americans make up 8.5% of the profession but only 1% of partners at U.S. CPA firms and 1.5%

of CFOs of Fortune 500 and S&P 500 companies. The survey revealed diverse talent believes they aren’t advancing in the profession because of a lack of equity and inclusion.

“Although our research highlights the stark reality facing the profession today, it also presents a great opportunity,” said Jeff Thomson, CMA, CSCA, CAE, IMA President and CEO. “Members of our profession are telling us that the only way to overcome today’s DE&I challenges is to collaborate to enact meaningful change, and collective action needs to be taken now.”

The study found that 43% to 55% of respondents from groups underrepresented at senior levels left their employers due to a perceived lack of equitable treatment, and at least 30% have left because of a lack of inclusion. The lack of DE&I poses risks to the success of the profession’s transformation currently underway. As many as 18% of the respondents from diverse demographic groups left the profession altogether due to these factors.

“The diversity gap between senior leadership and the broader accounting profession is a huge wake-up call that this needs to be fixed through real solutions,” said Anthony Pugliese, CPA, CGMA, CIPP, CalCPA President and CEO. “More diverse leaders are needed to connect people of all backgrounds to the profession and to serve as role models so we can retain and develop the next generation of talent.”

The study concluded that for the profession

**‘The diversity gap between senior leadership and the broader accounting profession is a huge wake-up call that this needs to be fixed through real solutions.’**

to continue to grow and succeed with a robust talent pipeline, actions to address DE&I issues need to be taken now. This includes bringing in and promoting talented people based on relevant and unbiased factors rather than demographics.

“This report gives a voice to members of the profession by presenting their contemporary experiences and is meant to heighten awareness and inspire change at all levels,” said Loreal Jiles, IMA Director of Research and lead researcher on this project.

The report acknowledges DE&I improvement efforts that are already underway and suggests action in four areas: awareness, attraction, promotion, and accountability.

“If we collaboratively work to close the diversity gap, it will not only have a positive impact on the front-end pipeline of candidates coming into the profession, it will work to curb the loss of talent that we are seeing,” said Brad

Monterio, CalCPA Chief Learning Officer and CalCPA research lead on this project.

Several partners worked with IMA and CalCPA on this research study, including The International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA), the Association of Latino Professionals for America (ALPFA), the National Society of Black CPAs (NSBCPA), the PhD Project, Connecticut Society of CPAs, Colorado Society of CPAs, Florida Institute of CPAs, Illinois CPA Society, Maryland Association of CPAs, Massachusetts Society of CPAs, The Ohio Society of CPAs, Pennsylvania Institute of CPAs, and Texas Society of CPAs.

For more information on the study, visit [imanet.org/diversifying-accounting-talent](http://imanet.org/diversifying-accounting-talent).

IMA is one of the largest and most respected associations focused exclusively on advancing the management accounting profession. For more information about IMA, visit [imanet.org](http://imanet.org).

CalCPA traces its heritage to 1903 when the California State Society of Certified Public Accountants was organized. In 1909, it merged with two other state CPA associations to form CalCPA. CalCPA serves more than 45,000 members in public practice, private industry, academia and government, and has 14 chapters across California. CalCPA also offers more than 1,400 live courses, conferences, webcasts and on-demand self-study courses annually. More information is available online at [calcpa.org](http://calcpa.org).



## KROST CONGRATULATES

### KEITH HAMASAKI, CPA

Director of Assurance and Advisory and  
Leader of the KROST Business Intelligence Industry Group

on his recognition as a

## MINORITY CPA OF INFLUENCE

Keith’s hard work and dedication to the needs of his clients have been hallmarks of his time at KROST, and as the industry leader for KBI he has taken his client service to the next level.

In implementing KBI, Keith and his team of analysts have leveraged raw data from client systems into dynamic reports that provide real insights catered to the Company and their industry.

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**We are proud to recognize Keith as a integral member of the KROST team and of the Los Angeles minority CPA community.**

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## MINORITIES OF INFLUENCE: CPAS

# CalCPA Forms Special Commission on Diversity and Inclusion to Address Challenges

The California Society of CPAs (CalCPA), the nation's largest state CPA society, announced last August that it has formed a special commission focused on diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) issues in the CPA profession. The 25-member CalCPA DE&I Commission (CDEIC) is chaired by Kathy A. Johnson, CPA, CGMA, MBA, vice president of forensic accounting at J.S. Held LLC. Johnson is a former chair of CalCPA's board of directors and focused on diversity and inclusion during her tenure as chair. Brad Monterio, CalCPA's Chief Learning Officer and vice president of Member Competency & Learning, will serve as the commission's vice chair. Monterio is also involved with other diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives in the accounting and actuarial professions. CalCPA President and CEO Anthony Pugliese, CPA, CGMA, CITP, is also a member of the commission.

The purpose of the CalCPA DE&I Commission is to:

- Embrace DE&I as drivers of satisfaction and engagement, as well as organizational resilience, innovation, value and growth in the accounting profession;
- Serve as a DE&I thought leader, advocate and resource for members, staff and partners while tapping into the worldwide DE&I body of knowledge and the collective experiences of CalCPA members, staff and partners; and

- Recommend and execute on strategies, approaches, programs, services and research that will help CalCPA leverage DE&I as a competitive advantage, develop pipelines of future accounting leaders and members, cultivate diverse and inclusive professional staff, attract partners who follow DE&I best practices and lead the accounting and finance profession of the future.

"Recent events in the US have turned a spotlight on diversity, equity and inclusion and the need for better education, awareness and cultural change across business and society," said Johnson. "Our goal is to not just talk about the DE&I issues and problems our profession is facing, but to be part of the solution—to actually do something and effect real change—so that the future of our accounting

profession is sustainable as well as diverse, equitable and inclusive."

The commission was developed as part of CalCPA's 90-day plan to catalyze efforts to solve DE&I challenges in the accounting profession in California, including attracting and retaining marginalized groups in public accounting and industry.

"Forming the commission is just a first step for CalCPA," said Monterio. "We are planning to be part of real DE&I solutions that drive change. For example, we are undertaking multi-phase research with our partner, the Institute of Management Accountants, on race and ethnicity, gender, orientation and diversity of thought that relate to recruitment and retention of underrepresented groups in the accounting profession. We plan to use the results and insights from this research to pro-

vide guidance and resources to CPAs and the businesses that hire them."

Recent research highlighted in a 2019 report from the World Economic Forum shows that diversity, equity and inclusion bring many advantages to organizations that include "increased profitability and creativity, stronger governance and better problem-solving abilities." This report also emphasized that employees with diverse backgrounds bring their own unique perspectives, ideas and experiences together to solve business challenges and drive resiliency, innovation and value creation. As a result, these organizations tend to outperform those who don't invest similarly in DE&I.

"Following good diversity, equity and inclusion practices is not just the right thing to do, it makes good business sense too—the future sustainability of our profession depends on it," added Johnson.

**'Our goal is to not just talk about the DE&I issues and problems our profession is facing, but to be part of the solution—to actually do something and effect real change—so that the future of our accounting profession is sustainable as well as diverse, equitable and inclusive.'**

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Gumbiner Savett Inc. congratulates

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